

SECTION 7

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

Goal 7.A: To provide for the long-term conservation and use of agriculturally-designated lands.

Policies

- 7.A.1. The County shall protect agriculturally-designated areas from conversion to non-agricultural uses.
- 7.A.2. The County shall ensure that unincorporated areas within city spheres of influence that are designated for agricultural uses are maintained in large parcel sizes of 10-acre minimums or larger.
- 7.A.3. The County shall encourage continued and, where possible, increased agricultural activities on lands suited to agricultural uses.
- 7.A.4. The County shall provide protection from flooding for agricultural and related activities from flooding.
- 7.A.5. The County shall regularly monitor and comment on pending state and federal legislation affecting agricultural lands.
- 7.A.6. The County shall encourage land improvement programs to increase soil productivity in those agricultural areas containing lesser quality soils.
- 7.A.7. The County shall maintain agricultural lands in large parcel sizes to retain viable farming units.
- 7.A.8. The County shall encourage infill development in urban areas as an alternative to expanding urban boundaries into agricultural areas.
- 7.A.9. The County shall support merging or reversion to acreage of substandard lots in "paper subdivisions" in agriculturally-designated areas under the same ownership, and not being used as separate parcels.
- 7.A.10. The County shall facilitate agricultural production by allowing agricultural service uses (i.e., commercial and industrial uses) to locate in agriculturally-designated areas if they relate to the primary agricultural activity in the area. The County shall use the following guidelines to analyze the suitability of a proposed agricultural service use:
 - a. The use will not adversely affect agricultural production in the area;
 - b. The use supports local agricultural production;
 - c. It is compatible with existing agricultural activities and residential uses in the area;
 - d. The use will not require the extension of sewer or water lines; and
 - e. It will not result in a concentration of commercial or industrial uses in the immediate area.
- 7.A.11. The County shall support appropriate efforts by private conservation organizations to use conservation easements as a tool for agricultural preservation.

- 7.A.12. The County shall actively encourage enrollments of agricultural lands in its Williamson Act program.
- 7.A.13. The County shall encourage multi-seasonal use such as private recreational development, agricultural lands, and timberlands to enhance the economic viability.

[See also policies/programs under Goal 1.G., Agricultural Land Use.]

Implementation Programs

- 7.1. The County should add a clause to all future Williamson Act contracts that prohibits subdivision of the land under contract for the duration of the contract, unless the Board of Supervisors can make the findings that a proposed subdivision enhances the long-term agricultural use of the land.

Responsibility: Agricultural Commissioner
Board of Supervisors
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding Source: N/A

- 7.2. The County shall encourage adoption of sound soil conservation practices for farming operations on highly erodible soils by directing landowners in these areas to the agricultural advisory services of the University of California Cooperative Extension, Farm and Home Advisor; the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, the Placer County Resource Conservation District, and the County Agricultural Commissioner.

Responsibility: Agricultural Commissioner
Department of Public Works
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding Source: General Fund

- 7.3. The County shall develop a program for the purchase and transfer of development rights as a means to preserve and protect agricultural land. Such a program should identify the most critical farmland for preservation based on physical and economic considerations. The program should identify the most suitable "receiving areas." The County should work with public and private agencies, including the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, the California Department of Conservation, the California Farm Bureau, and the American Farmland Trust., in developing the program.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Agricultural Commissioner
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding Source: General Fund
Public Bond

LAND USE CONFLICTS

- Goal 7.B:** To minimize existing and future conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses in agriculturally-designated areas.

Policies

- 7.B.1. The County shall identify and maintain clear boundaries between urban/suburban and agricultural areas and require land use buffers between such uses where feasible. These buffers shall occur on the parcel for which the development permit is sought and shall favor protection of the maximum amount of farmland.
- 7.B.2. The County shall weigh the economic benefits of surface mining against the value of preserving agriculture when considering mineral extraction proposals on land designated for agricultural use.
- 7.B.3. The County shall consider fencing subdivided lands adjoining agricultural uses as a potential mitigation measure to reduce conflicts between residential and agricultural uses. Factors to be considered in implementing such a measure include:
 - a. The type of agricultural operation (i.e., livestock, orchard, timber, row crops);
 - b. The size of the lots to be created;
 - c. The presence or lack of fences in the area;
 - d. Existing natural barriers that prevent trespass; and
 - e. Passage of wildlife.
- 7.B.4. The County shall continue to enforce the provisions of its Right-to-Farm Ordinance and of the existing state nuisance law.
- 7.B.5. The County shall encourage educational programs to inform Placer County residents of the importance of protecting farmland.

ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF AGRICULTURE

Goal 7.C: To protect and enhance the economic viability Placer County's agricultural operations.

Policies

- 7.C.1. The County shall attempt to improve the financial viability of the agricultural sector of Placer County's economy through actions that have the potential to reduce costs and increase profits.
- 7.C.2. The County shall promote agricultural operations that provide a competitive edge to Placer County farmers.
- 7.C.3. The County shall support opportunities to promote and market agricultural products grown or processed within Placer County (such as Farmers' Markets) as a part of the economic development activities of local agencies.
- 7.C.4. The County shall permit a wide variety of promotional and marketing activities for County-grown products in all agricultural zone districts.
- 7.C.5. The County shall permit on-farm product handling and selling. The County shall permit stands for the sale of agricultural products in any agricultural land use designation to promote and market those agricultural products grown or processed in Placer County. Secondary and incidental sales of agricultural products grown elsewhere may be permitted subject to appropriate approvals.
- 7.C.6. The County shall ensure that land use regulations do not arbitrarily restrict potential agricultural-

related enterprises which could provide supplemental sources of income for farm operators.

- 7.C.7. The County shall maintain regulations that exempt certain agricultural buildings from the construction requirements of the Uniform Building Code, subject to limitations on the size, occupancy, location, and use of such structures.
- 7.C.8. The County shall ensure that changes in special district assessment and local taxes do not unduly burden owners of agricultural lands.
- 7.C.9. The County shall urge the State Legislature to provide more funding for the Agricultural Export Program of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, which seeks to expand foreign markets for several commodities produced in Placer County.
- 7.C.10. The County shall urge the State Legislature to expand Rural Renaissance Program funding to include agriculture-related activities such as market and product development analysis.

Implementation Program

- 7.5. The County shall develop and adopt procedures to review and evaluate the impact of proposed changes in assessments and local taxes on owners of agriculturally-designated lands relative to the impact on owners of lands designated for other uses.

Responsibility:	County Executive Local Agency Formation Commission
Time Frame:	FY 94-95
Funding Source:	General Fund

AGRICULTURAL WATER

Goal 7.D: To maximize the productivity of Placer County's agriculture uses by ensuring adequate supplies of water.

- 7.D.1. The County shall support efforts to deliver adequate surface water to agricultural areas with deficient water supplies.
- 7.D.2. The County shall encourage water conservation by farmers. To this end, the County shall, through the Agricultural Commissioner and U.C. Cooperative Extension, continue to provide information on irrigation methods and best management practices. The County shall also support conservation efforts of the California Farm Bureau, resource conservation districts, Soil Conservation Service, and irrigation districts.
- 7.D.3. The County should participate with cities and special districts in establishing programs for the agricultural re-use of treated wastewater in a manner that would be economically beneficial to agriculture.
- 7.D.4. The County shall participate and encourage multi-agency participation in water projects where such coordination can improve the likelihood of providing affordable irrigation water to areas of Placer County with deficient water supplies.

- 7.D.5. The County will work with local irrigation districts to preserve local water rights to ensure that water saved through conservation may be stored and used locally, rather than appropriated and used outside of Placer County.
- 7.D.6. The County shall encourage the use of reclaimed water where appropriate for agricultural production.

[See also policies/programs under Goal 6.A., Water Resources.]

FOREST RESOURCES

Goal 7.E: To conserve Placer County's forest resources, enhance the quality and diversity of forest ecosystems, reduce conflicts between forestry and other uses, and encourage a sustained yield of forest products.

Policies

- 7.E.1. The County shall encourage the sustained productive use of forest land as a means of providing open space and conserving other natural resources.
- 7.E.2. The County shall discourage development that conflicts with timberland management.
- 7.E.3. The County shall work closely and coordinate with agencies involved in the regulation of timber harvest operations to ensure that County conservation goals are achieved.
- 7.E.4. The County shall encourage qualified landowners to enroll in the Timberland Production Zone (TPZ) program.
- 7.E.5. The County shall review all proposed timber harvest plans (THPs) and shall request that the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) amend THPs to address public safety concerns, such as requiring alternate haul routes if use of proposed haul routes would jeopardize public health and safety or result in damage to public or private roads.
- 7.E.6. The County shall encourage and promote the productive use of wood waste generated in the County.

Implementation Programs

- 7.6. The County, in consultation with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, shall conduct a careful evaluation of the Forest Practice Rules with regard to clearcutting and other forest management practices with potential visual impacts; use of prescribed burning; protection of biological, soil, and water resources; and protection of old growth forest in Placer County. If the Forest Practice Rules are found to be inadequate, a Special Forest Practice Rules package for Placer County shall be proposed to the Board of Forestry to address these inadequacies.

Responsibility:	Planning Department Agricultural Commissioner Board of Supervisors
Time Frame:	FY 96-97
Funding:	General Fund

- 7.7. The County shall encourage the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to complete an inventory of new trees and existing and residual stands of ancient and old growth forest on private timberlands in Placer County. The results of this inventory shall be incorporated into the County's biological resources database for use in future land use planning decisions.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Agricultural Commissioner
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: General Fund
State grants

- 7.8. The County shall encourage the U.S. Forest Service and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to identify the potential impacts on, and the need for preservation of, old growth forests in Placer County.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Agricultural Commissioner
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: N/A

- 7.9. The County shall formally request that the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection include educational materials for residents in its Notice of Intent to Harvest Timber. Such materials should include information concerning the Forest Practice Act, Forest Practice Rules, and Department of Forestry Timber Harvest Plan review process.

Responsibility: Planning Department
Agricultural Commissioner
Time Frame: FY 94-95
Funding: General Fund